



THE CAPITAL BUDGET

Our capital budget was the best school construction budget in our state's history. By spending over \$78 million in the 22nd Legislative District (4th highest among 49 districts), the capital budget will also address a wide array of other district needs, including the completion of Heritage Park and the acquisition of land at Hawks Prairie for a future satellite campus for South Puget Sound Community College.

SESSION 2005 HIGHLIGHTS

We accomplished many important policy objectives I co-sponsored, including:

- Passage of landmark court funding legislation, a personal priority as Judiciary Committee vice chair given that Washington had been ranked 50th nationally in state funding for its courts.
- Passage of mental health parity legislation.
- Passage of green buildings legislation.
- Passage of cleaner vehicle emissions legislation.
- Passage of a number of prescription drug reform bills.
- Passage of bills assisting veterans and active-duty National Guard.
- Creation of an Oil Spill Advisory Council through a House floor striking amendment that I sponsored and defended against those friendly to the oil industry.

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Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks Committee*



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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22nd Legislative District



2005

SESSION
SUMMARY



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Funding Washington's Priorities

Serious challenges call for serious leadership. During the 2005 legislative session we confronted a state revenue shortfall of \$1.6 billion and a host of unmet funding needs. Amazingly, we addressed these challenges in just 105 days.

Governor Gregoire pledged to avoid a general tax increase, and we honored her promise.

- We restored an estate tax that was in place since 1901 until a February court decision. It will only affect approximately 250 estates annually in a state of over 6 million people.
- We also increased so-called “sin taxes” on cigarettes and hard liquor, and tax extended warranties.

Make no mistake, there were difficult cuts in this budget, too, that followed \$4 billion worth of cuts in the last four years. State government will eliminate 1,000 middle management positions, and pay increases were delayed for many hard-working state employees. Strict government accountability measures were adopted, including performance audits. And resolution of many urgent funding needs, as well as necessary tax reform, will await another day.

Education

With the new revenue, we produced the best budget for education and higher education (including 7900 new enrollments) in years, and restored the promise of Initiatives 728 and 732: Funding teachers' pay increases and class-size reduction.



Health Care and Social Services

We also maintained a fragile social safety net, including restoring \$80.7 million for community mental health lost to a Bush Administration cut, fully funding the Basic Health Plan, spending an extra \$25.7 million on the critical need for child care rate increases, and setting in motion a plan to ensure all our state's children have health care coverage by 2010. We honored collective bargaining agreements for home care workers and state employees, an obvious priority in the 22nd Legislative District.



Capital High School



The Student Union Building at South Puget Sound Community College



TRANSPORTATION: *Keeping Our Roads Safe*

Especially at a time when gas prices are high, there may be no more unpopular tax than the gas tax. But, with federal funding disappearing, we have a responsibility to lead, and that includes raising gas tax revenue to pay for crumbling traffic infrastructure. Both business and labor supported this effort.

As a state representative, I must look out for both my district and the state as a whole. We are *one* Washington. It would obviously be devastating both in human lives and to the state's economy if, say, the Alaskan Way Viaduct were to collapse or the Highway 520 floating bridge to sink. The Transportation Partnership Act of 2005 (TPA) addresses these very critical projects, and ensures tolls are part of the equation so those most directly benefiting pay.

Locally we also need to seismically retrofit the Interstate 5 bridges over the Nisqually River, near the Nisqually earthquake's epicenter. The TPA funds this, the future creation of a new Lacey I-5 sound barrier, and immediate study of West Olympia congestion off of Highway 101. The TPA also provides:

- \$160 million to widen I-5 south of Tumwater.
- A \$33 million “Yelm Loop” to relieve Yelm's traffic by allowing travelers along Highway 510 to bypass driving through Yelm.
- Finally, and importantly, the TPA funds public transit and bicyclist/pedestrian safety efforts. It would also, for the first time in 14 years, increase gas tax distributions to cities and counties by a penny a gallon. Annually this means hundreds of thousands in crucial new transportation funding for Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County.

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My floor speeches primarily involved Judiciary Committee issues, such as my bill authorizing a new Thurston County District Court judge.

We also provide major accountability improvements. We take the appointment of the Department of Transportation secretary away from an archaic, unelected commission and put that appointment in the governor's hands. For the first time, we also facilitate performance audits of transportation agencies.

Gas tax increases of less than a dime total over four years do not even keep pace with inflation, nor match increases in the tens of cents inflicted upon us by our president's friends in the Middle East. In contrast to such price increases there is a real return on your investment for a gas tax increase. I strongly encourage constituents to hold our feet to the fire to ensure your tax dollars are spent wisely and efficiently.

“NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND”?

According to the Center on Budget & Policy Priorities, the Bush Administration's proposed 2006-10 budget would result in \$233.3 million in children's education cuts in our state (over half in special education), and \$51.2 million in cuts to Head Start and services for abused and neglected children. Around 8700 Washington children would lose federal child care assistance, and \$14.1 million would be cut from supplemental nutrition for pregnant women, infants and children.